

protect your land, which is good for the country.

I'm honored to be here. Mr. Mayor, thanks for coming. It's great to be in a part of the world where people work with their hands and make a living off the land.

God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our great country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:55 p.m. at the Katzenmeyer family farm. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota.

Remarks in Mankato, Minnesota

August 4, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Thanks for inviting me. It's good to be in Mankato. I understand I'm the first President to have visited here since Harry Truman. I don't know what took the others so long to get here. *[Laughter]* Thanks for having me.

I'm here to ask for your vote. I'm also here to ask for your help. I appreciate you coming. I understand I'm not the biggest deal in town. After all, the Vikings practice here. *[Laughter]* But it is great to be in a place where people work hard and make a living off the land, raise their families. It's what I call the heart and soul of the country. The other folks believe the heart and soul can be found in Hollywood. I think it's found right here in southern Minnesota.

I'm excited about the race. I'm looking forward to the contest. Everywhere we go, the crowds are big, the enthusiasm is high, the signs are good. With your help, Dick Cheney and I will be reelected for 4 more years.

I'm sorry Laura is not here. I know you are too. You probably wish I had stayed at home and she was the speaker. *[Laughter]* She is a great wife, a fantastic mother, and a wonderful First Lady for our country. Today I'm going to give you some reasons to put me back in, but perhaps the most important reason of all is so that Laura is First Lady for 4 more years.

I'm proud to be running with Dick Cheney. Admittedly, he's not the prettiest Vice Presidential candidate in the race. *[Laughter]* I didn't pick him for his looks. *[Laughter]*

I picked him for his judgment, his sound advice.

I'm proud to be with Norm Coleman. He's doing a fine job as a United States Senator. And I'm proud of the job Governor Pawlenty is doing as well. He's a good man. Plus, I appreciate working with Congressman Gutknecht and Congressman Kline, two really fine people, as well. I appreciate you guys being here. Thank you.

I want to thank all the State people who are here and the local people who have come out. Thanks for being here today. I particularly want to thank the grassroots activists who are here. Those are the people who put up the signs and make the phone calls. These are the folks who go out and get people to register to vote. Let me tell you something, here's what I believe: I believe all of us have a duty in our country to vote. We have a duty to exercise our right as free citizens. I want to thank you for registering people and encouraging them to vote. Don't overlook discerning Democrats and wise independents. Get them to the polls, and when you get them headed our way, make sure they—give them a little nudge toward the Bush-Cheney ticket.

We came close in Minnesota last time. This time, we're going to win it. Every incumbent who asks for your vote has got to answer one central question, and that's why—why should the American people give me the high privilege of serving as your President for 4 more years. In the past few years, we've done a lot, and we've come through a lot together. But there's only one reason to look backward, and that is to determine who best to lead the Nation forward.

I'm asking for your vote because so much is at stake in this election. We have much more to do to move America forward. I want to be your President for 4 more years to make our country safer, to make our economy stronger, and to make the future brighter and better for every single citizen.

From creating jobs to improving schools, from fighting terror to spreading the peace, we have made much progress, and we have more to do. We have more to do to make America's public schools the centers of excellence we all know they can be, so that not one single child is left behind in our country.

When we came to office 3½ years ago, too many children were being shuffled from grade to grade, year after year, without learning the basics. So we've challenged the soft bigotry of low expectations. We've raised the bar. We believe in accountability. We trust the local folks to run the schools of America. Today, children across America are showing real progress in reading and math. When it comes to improving America's public schools, we are turning the corner, and we're not going back.

We have more to do. Listen, this world of ours is changing. The jobs of the future will require greater knowledge and higher-level skills. So that's why we need to reform our high schools to make sure a high school diploma means something. We're going to expand math and science education so our young people can compete in a high-tech world. We'll expand the use of the Internet to bring high-level training into classrooms. With 4 more years, we will help a rising generation gain the skills and confidence they need to achieve the American Dream.

We have more to do to make quality health care available and affordable. When we came to office, too many older Americans could not afford prescription drugs, and Medicare didn't pay for them. Leaders in both political parties had promised prescription drug coverage for years. We got the job done. Already, more than 4 million seniors have signed up for drug discount cards that provide real and meaningful savings. Beginning in 2006, all seniors on Medicare will be able to choose a plan that suits their needs and gives them coverage for prescription drugs.

You see, when we reformed Medicare, we did so with rural hospitals in mind as well. We provided more funds to hospitals handling low volumes of patients. We increased payments for ambulance providers and suppliers in rural areas. We're giving better bonuses to physicians so we can keep good doctors practicing in rural America. We made a difference for the older citizens of this country, and we made a difference for those who seek health care in rural America.

To help people get access to quality care, we've expanded community health centers for low-income Americans. We've created health savings accounts so families can save

tax-free for their own health care needs. When it comes to giving Americans more choices about their own health care and making health care more affordable, we're moving America forward, and we're not turning back.

Listen, most Americans get health care coverage through their work. But most of today's new jobs are created by small businesses, which too often cannot afford to provide health care. To help more American families get health insurance, we must allow small employers to join together to purchase insurance at the discounts available for big companies.

To improve health care, we must end the frivolous lawsuits that raise health care costs and drive good doctors out of medicine. You cannot be pro-patient and pro-doctor and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put him on the ticket. [*Laughter*] I made my choice, and on behalf of the patients and doctors of America, I will continue to urge Congress to pass medical liability reform.

We'll do more to harness technology to reduce costs and to prevent health care mistakes. We'll do more to expand research and seek new cures for terrible diseases. And in all we do to improve health care in America, we'll make sure the health decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by bureaucrats in Washington, DC.

We have more to do to make sure our economy is stronger. Listen, we've come through a lot. We've been through a recession. We've been through corporate scandals. We've been through terror attacks. We've been through a market decline. Listen—and we've overcome the obstacles. We've got great workers in America, is one reason we've overcome them. We've got great entrepreneurs. We've got great farmers and great ranchers in this country.

We've also overcome these obstacles because of well-timed tax cuts. Listen, when we cut the taxes, we didn't pick winners or losers. We said if you pay Federal income taxes, you get tax relief. Families with children got tax relief. Married couples got tax relief. It's an amazing Tax Code where we say we're going to have a marriage penalty.

Why do we want to penalize marriage? We need to encourage marriage in the country.

A lot of the tax relief went to help small businesses, and the small-business sector of our economy is strong today. We promised all this. We delivered, and this time the check was actually in the mail. Because we acted, our economy since last summer has grown at a rate as fast as any in nearly 20 years. We've added more than 1.5 million new jobs since last August. Minnesota has added 32,000 jobs over the past year. Because we acted, the unemployment rate in this State is now 4.4 percent. When it comes to creating jobs for America's workers, we've turned the corner, and we're not turning back.

I also told the people when I was running for President the last time, I said, "I understand the need to have a healthy farm economy." A good farm economy is good for the American economy. We passed a good farm bill. We're phasing out the death tax so farmers can pass their land from one generation to the next.

In order to make sure jobs are here, we've got to make sure our farm economy is strong. And one way to make sure the farm economy is strong is to open up markets for Minnesota farm products. We want you selling your soybeans all around the world. We want you selling your corn all around the world. We want to be selling that Minnesota beef and hogs all around the world.

In order to make sure jobs stay here at home, we've got to have an energy strategy. See, we need to be better at conserving things, and we've got to be exploring for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. But for the sake of energy security, for the sake of economic security, we need more ethanol and biodiesel. I envision a day where sometime, somebody walks in and says, "Well, Mr. President, you'll be happy to hear the corn crop is up and we're growing more soybeans in America, and we're less dependent on foreign sources of oil as a result of it."

And when you're out gathering the vote, remind the folks that in the last 3 years American farmers have posted record net-cash farm income, record exports, and record farm equity and land values. Our farm program is working.

Listen, we can do more to keep jobs here. You know, I'm sure the small-business owners will tell you they've got to fill out a lot of paperwork. I can't guarantee whether Government has read it or not. [Laughter] We need less regulation. In order to keep jobs here in America, we need tort reform. In order to keep jobs here in America, we've got to make sure American workers have a lifetime of learning, and we've got to help them training—help them have training for the jobs of the 21st century. And a good place to start is at our community colleges.

And you know what else we need? We need to make sure that American families have something they never have enough of, and that is time—time to be with their kids, time to go to the Little League game or work in a Girl Scout troop, time to take care of an elderly parent, time to go to class to improve themselves. And that's why I think Congress ought to pass comp-time and flex-time rules.

In other words, what I'm telling you is Government needs to stand side by side with families. After 4 more years, this economy is going to be strong, more people will be working with better jobs. After 4 more years, there will be more small-business owners. After 4 more years, our farmers are going to be doing better. You know why? Because we've got a pro-growth, pro-entrepreneur, pro-agricultural economic agenda.

We've got to do more to wage and win the war on terror. America's future depends on our willingness to lead in the world. If we show uncertainty and weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. That's not going to happen on my watch. The world changed on a terrible September morning, and since that day, we've changed the world.

Before September the 11th, Afghanistan served as the home base of Al Qaida, which trained and deployed thousands of killers who set up terror cells around the world, including our own country. Today, Afghanistan is a rising democracy. Today, Afghanistan is a firm ally in the war against terror. And today, many young girls go to school for the first time. Afghanistan is free, and America and the world are safer.

Before September the 11th, Pakistan was a safe transit point for terrorists. Today, Pakistan is an ally in the war against Al Qaida. Pakistani forces are helping to round up the terrorists, and America and the world are safer.

Before September the 11th, in Saudi Arabia, terrorists were raising money; they were recruiting; they were operating with little opposition. Today, the Saudi Government is taking the fight to Al Qaida, and America and the world are safer.

Before September the 11th, Libya was spending millions to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Today, because America and our allies have sent a strong and clear message, the leader of Libya has abandoned his pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, and America and the world are safer.

Before September the 11th, the ruler of Iraq was a sworn enemy of America. He was defying the world. Remember, he was firing weapons at American pilots which were enforcing the world's sanctions. The tyrant had pursued and used weapons of mass destruction. He'd harbored terrorists. He invaded his neighbors. And he subsidized the families of suicide bombers. He murdered tens of thousands of his own citizens. He was a source of great instability in a volatile part of the world.

After September the 11th, we looked at all the threats of the world in a new light. The lesson of September the 11th is that America must take threats seriously, before they fully materialize.

The September the 11th Commission concluded that our institutions of Government had failed to imagine the horror of that day. After September the 11th, we could not fail to imagine that a brutal tyrant who hated America, had ties to terror, had used weapons of mass destruction might use those weapons or share the capability of those weapons with terrorist enemy. In other words, we saw a threat. I looked at the intelligence and saw a threat. Members of the United States Congress from both political parties, including my opponent, looked at the intelligence and came to the same conclusion. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence and unanimously demanded that Saddam Hussein disclose, de-

stroy weapons or weapons programs, or face serious consequences. The world spoke.

After 12 years of defiance, after 12 years of ignoring the demands of the free world, he once again refused to comply. As a matter of fact, he systematically deceived the weapons inspectors. So I had a choice to make: forget the lessons of September the 11th and trust a madman who is a sworn enemy of this country, or take action necessary to defend our people. Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Because Saddam Hussein sits in a prison cell, the Iraqi people are free, and America and the world are safer.

We have more to do. I'm seeking the office for 4 more years because I know we have more to do. We must continue to work with friends and allies around the world to aggressively pursue the terrorists and foreign fighters in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere. See, you can't talk sense to these people. You cannot negotiate with them. You cannot hope for the best. We must engage them so we do not have to face them here at home.

America will continue to lead the world with confidence and moral clarity. We put together a strong coalition to help defeat the enemies of freedom. There are nearly 40 nations involved in Afghanistan, some 30 nations in Iraq, and over 60 nations involved with the Proliferation Security Initiative. Over the next 4 years, we'll continue to build alliances and work with our friends in the cause of security and peace. But I will never turn America's national security decisions over to leaders of other nations.

We'll keep our commitments to help Afghanistan and Iraq become democratic, free, and, therefore, peaceful societies. These two nations are now governed by strong people, people who are willing to listen to the hopes and aspirations of the people. You know what the hopes and aspirations of mothers and dads are in Iraq and Afghanistan? They want their children to grow up in a peaceful world just like in—American moms and dads do. They want there to be hope for their kids. They want them to be able to realize their dreams. These leaders understand that. More and more Iraqis are now stepping up

to defend the peace, to defend their freedom.

And my message to those people is that they can count on continued help from America and our coalition. You see, when we acted to protect our own security, we promised to help deliver them from tyranny, to restore their sovereignty, and to help set them on the road to liberty. And when America gives its word, America will keep its word.

In these crucial times, our commitments are kept by the men and women of our military. First, I want to thank all the veterans who are here. I appreciate the example you've set for our troops today. I've had the privilege of meeting those who wear our Nation's uniform. I've seen their great decency, their unselfish courage. The cause of freedom is in really good hands.

We owe our troops best pay, best training, best possible equipment. That's why last September, while our troops were in combat in both Afghanistan and Iraq, I proposed supplemental funding to support them in their mission. The legislation provided funding for body armor and vital equipment, hazard pay, health benefits, ammunition, fuel, and spare parts. In the Senate, only a small, out-of-the-mainstream minority of 12 senators voted against that help. Two of those twelve are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Here's how my opponent tried to explain his vote. He said, "I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, before I voted against it." [Laughter] That doesn't sound the way they talk here in southern Minnesota. I suspect the people around here, when they say something, they mean it. Now my opponent is offering a different explanation. He said he was proud he voted against it, and then he further said the whole thing is a complicated matter. There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

In the long run, our security is not guaranteed by force alone. We must work to change the conditions that give rise to terror: poverty and hopelessness and resentment. See, a free and peaceful Iraq and a free and peaceful Afghanistan will be powerful examples to their neighbors. Free countries do not export terror. Free countries listen to the dreams

of their citizens. By serving the ideal of liberty, we're bringing hope to others, and that makes our country more secure. By serving the ideal of liberty, we're spreading peace. And by serving the ideal of liberty, we're serving a basic understanding of our country, a basic value of America. See, freedom is not America's gift to the world. Freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

I'm running for 4 more years because I understand we have more to do to protect America. See, there are enemies who hate us, and they're still plotting to harm us. Those who claim that America's war on terror, our efforts to defend ourselves, is to blame for terrorist threats against the United States have a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of the enemy we face. The 9/11 Commission said America homeland is safe, but—safer, but we're not yet safe. I agree. There's more to do here at home.

Immediately after September the 11th, we started the hard process of reform. We transformed our defenses and created the Department of Homeland Security. We passed the PATRIOT Act, which was necessary to give law enforcement the tools necessary to defend the American people. The mission of the FBI is now focused on preventing terrorism. We're integrating intelligence and law enforcement better than we ever have before. We're already taking action on a large majority of the 9/11 Commission's recommendations. And they did good work, and I thank them for their work.

We've got more to do to better secure our ports and borders, to train first-responders, and to dramatically improve our intelligence-gathering capability. That's why, this week, I called on Congress to create the position of National Intelligence Director, so that one person is in charge of coordinating all intelligence overseas and here at home. These reforms are not going to be easy, particularly in Washington. [Laughter] Reform is never easy there. See, there's a lot of entrenched interests that love to defend the status quo. It's not enough to advocate reform. You have to be able to get it done.

And that's what we have done. When it comes to reforming schools to provide excellent education for all our children, we got

the job done. Results matter. When it comes to health care reforms to give families more access and more choices, results matter. When it comes to improving our economy and creating jobs, results matter. When it comes to having a strong farm economy, results matter. When it comes to better securing our homeland, fighting the forces of terror, and spreading the peace, results matter. When it comes to electing a President, results matter.

We live in an exciting time. It's a time of change. But we ought to make sure Government responds to these times by standing side by side with people. You know how I think the best way to do that is to promote ownership society. You see, if you're a worker and you're changing jobs, you've got to be able to own your own health care plan so you can take it from job to job. We want people to own their own home in America. We want people to be able to say, "Welcome to my house. This is my piece of property." And more and more are, under this administration. We want younger workers to be able to own a Social Security personal retirement account they call their own, so they can pass it on to future generations. We want tax policy such that younger Americans can own their own farm. We want people owning their own small business. We understand that when you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of our country.

No, this world is changing, but there are some things that aren't going to change: our belief in liberty and opportunity and the non-negotiable demands of human dignity. The individual values we try to live by will not change, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. The institutions that give us direction and purpose must not change, our families, and our schools, and our religious congregation. These institutions are fundamental to our lives. They deserve the respect of our Government.

We stand for institutions like marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every person counts. We stand for judges who faithfully interpret the law instead of legislating from the bench.

And we stand for a culture of responsibility in America. Listen, our culture is changing from one that said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we're responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you're fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you're responsible for loving that child with all your heart and all your soul. If you're worried about the quality of the education here in this community, do something about it. You're responsible for taking action. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees.

In a responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved yourself. I understand that the strength of this country is the hearts and souls of the American people. I'm seeking 4 more years to continue to rally the armies of compassion so we can help change our country, one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. We need firm resolve, clear vision, a willingness to lead. And none of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began.

On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I'll never forget. I remember workers in hardhats yelling at me, "Whatever it takes." I'll never forget the guy that grabbed me by the arm—I don't remember if he was a firefighter or a policeman. I do know he had been in the rubble searching for a loved one. His eyes were bloodshot. He said, "Do not let me down."

See, he took it personally. Folks searching the rubble took it personally. You took it personally, and I took it personally. I have a responsibility that goes on. I wake up every morning thinking how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

We've come through much together. We've done hard work. During the next 4 years, there's more to do, more to spread

ownership and opportunity for every corner of this country—I mean every corner. We'll pass the enduring values of our country to another generation. During the next 4 years, we'll lead the world in the cause of freedom and peace.

When I was campaigning in your great State in 2000, I said if you honored me with the great responsibility, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected, so help me God. And with your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

Thanks for coming. May God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5 p.m. at the Southern Minnesota Construction Co. quarry. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota; Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission).

Remarks on Signing the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2005

August 5, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated.

America and our allies are fighting a new kind of war against a different kind of enemy. This conflict places great demands on the men and women of our Armed Forces, including our Guard and Reserve. They have met every test. They've risen to every challenge.

The war also places demands on those of us in Government. We took an oath to protect our country. We have a solemn responsibility to support the service men and women who defend us in the field of battle. The Defense appropriations bill I will sign today commits \$391 billion toward meeting that responsibility. With this legislation, America's military will know that their country stands behind them as they fight for our freedom and as they spread the peace. No enemy or friend can doubt that America has the resources to prevail, and we will.

I want to thank the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, for his steadfast and

strong leadership of our Pentagon. Mr. Secretary, thank you.

Secretary Rumsfeld. Thank you, sir.

The President. I appreciate Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz for joining us today. I appreciate the other members of the Pentagon team who are here. I appreciate Jim Roche and Les Brownlee representing the Air Force and the Army. General Myers, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, is with us. I appreciate the Chairman. I want to thank all the military generals who are here, who run their respective branches of the services. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for your leadership.

I appreciate Senator John Warner representing the United States Congress. Senator Warner is a strong leader when it comes to matters of defense. He's the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. This bill passed with overwhelming bipartisan support. I want thank you for that, sir.

America's military is fighting in many theaters, yet always for the same cause. We seek to preserve freedom and peace for ourselves and for our friends.

In the last 3 years, our military men and women have struck a series of decisive blows against the enemy. They have relentlessly attacked the Al Qaida network. They've killed or captured many of its leaders. They've destroyed its terror camps. We're disrupting its plans. We're doing our duty.

We've ended regimes in Kabul and Baghdad that supported and harbored terrorists and threatened America. They have helped to launch the nations of Iraq and Afghanistan on the path to lasting democracy and liberty. They have helped friendly nations build the strength and institutions necessary to fight terror. At this hour, our troops are staying on the offensive against Al Qaida. We're taking the fight to the enemies, those who can't stand the thought of a free Iraq and free Afghanistan. Our troops are making America safer, and we're grateful for their sacrifices.

These great achievements have come at a cost of human life and grief. America is grateful for the families of those who mourn a loved one. We will honor their memory by completing the mission and making the world a more peaceful place. We have made a commitment to the men and women of our Armed Forces. We will support them. We